



**Committee
Services Organizational Meeting
and the Northampton City Council** **on City**

Committee Members:

Chair: Councilor Marianne L. LaBarge

Vice-Chair: Councilor Karen Foster

Councilor Rachel Maiore

Councilor Michael J. Quinlan, Jr.

Meeting Minutes

Date: October 5, 2020

Virtual Meeting

1. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

At 4:03 p.m., Councilor Marianne LaBarge (Chair) called the meeting to order. On a roll call, Councilors LaBarge, Foster, Maiore and Quinlan were present.

2. ANNOUNCEMENT OF AUDIO/VIDEO RECORDING

Councilor LaBarge announced that the meeting was being audio/video recorded.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

4. MINUTES OF JULY 20, 2020

Councilor Quinlan moved to approve the minutes of July 20, 2020. Councilor Maiore seconded. The motion passed unanimously 4:0 by roll call vote.

5. DEPARTMENTAL UPDATE - PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Presentation by Recreation Department Director Ann-Marie Moggio

Due to a miscommunication, Director Moggio was not present. Councilor LaBarge proceeded to the next item on the agenda.

6. ITEMS REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

A. 20.117 Appointment to the Arts Council - referred by City Council - 9/3/2020

Arts Council

Michael Abbatiello, 161 Main St., Leeds, MA - **Councilor Maiore**

Term: September 2020-June 2023

To fill a vacancy

She had another lovely conversation with Michael Abbatiello, Councilor Maiore reported. He is the technical director at the Academy of Music (AOM) and has a long background as a

professional dancer. He is really excited. He has worked his way up, this is kind of what he's been grooming to do for a few years. She thinks he's going to be a great addition to the Arts Council.

Councilor Maiore moved to forward the appointment of Michael Abbatiello to the Arts Council with a positive recommendation. Councilor Foster seconded. The motion passed unanimously 4:0 by roll call vote.

B. 20.127 Appointments to Various Committees, referred by City Council - 9/17/2020

Arts Council

Ashlynn Cradic, 386 Bridge St., Northampton, MA - **Councilor Quinlan**

Term: September 2020-June 2023

To fill a vacancy

Conservation Commission

Jennifer Smith, 24 Audubon Road, Leeds, MA - **Councilor Maiore**

Term: September 2020-June 2023

To fill a vacancy

Disability Commission

Kathy Murri, 50 Laurel Park, Northampton, MA - **Councilor LaBarge**

Term: September 2020-June 2023

To fill a vacancy

Human Rights Commission

Susan MacDonald-Bolanos, 1 Chapin Way, Unit 7517, Smith College, Northampton, MA - **Councilor Foster**

Term: September 2020- June 2022

To fill a vacancy

Planning Board

Janna White - **Councilor Foster**

Full Member

Term: September 2020-June 2022

To fill the unexpired term of Euripedes de Oliveira

Chris Tait, 46 Upland Road, Leeds, MA - **Councilor Quinlan**

Associate Member

Term: September 2020- June 2021

To fill the unexpired term of Janna White

He had a chance to speak to Ashlynn Cradic Friday for a few minutes, Councilor Quinlan shared. He is pleased that she is a younger person who wants to become involved in the city and who brings some passion and expertise to the group she wants to join. They spoke specifically about her work booking events in the area - some of her work in college had to do with film festivals and gallery events - and he asked how that translated into her work on the Arts Council. She mentioned that the experience planning and promoting those events and doing community outreach for them is something she has a lot of pride in and is able to do really well. She has had a lot of opportunities through some of her projects to work as part of a team in both leadership roles and as a member. He asked if there was one event she could make bigger, what it would be, and she mentioned the Northampton film festival as something that could be done as a drive-in event in the time of COVID.

Councilor Quinlan moved to forward the appointment of Ashlynn Cradic to the Arts Council with a positive recommendation. Councilor Foster seconded. The motion passed unanimously 4:0 by roll call vote.

Jennifer Smith, Conservation Commission

Ms. Smith said she's been wanting to serve for a while in that position as it's been a lifelong interest, Councilor Maiore shared. She was one of the founders of Crimson and Clover Farm. She seems very grounded in the minutia of what it takes to conserve land, has a lot of skills in that area and is very excited to be a part of it.

Councilor Maiore moved to positively recommend Jennifer Smith for appointment to the Conservation Commission. Councilor Foster seconded. The motion passed unanimously 4:0 by roll call vote.

Disability Commission - Kathy Murri

She had a lengthy talk with Kathy Murri, Councilor LaBarge reported. She is very interested in people with disabilities and thanked her for reviewing her application. Her interest in the world of accessibility started a long time ago when she was a student at Hampshire College pursuing a degree in elementary and special education. Massachusetts had just passed and was implementing Chapter 766. She did her Division III senior project on mainstreaming and completed an internship at Belchertown State School and Northampton public schools. After graduation, she worked at Oak Hill School in Hartford with multi-handicapped deaf and blind preschoolers and then went on to be a special needs coordinator at a project head start in Springfield. She was self-employed before coming to her current position as Director of Finance and Operations at the Montessori School of Northampton. A few years ago, a friend of hers started having trouble with his hands and balance which was eventually diagnosed as a motor neuron disease. She became certified as a caregiving consultant and caregiving facilitator and began moderating online chat groups. The research she was doing to find accommodations for him as his illness progressed motivated her to both start a Facebook page where some of those ideas are featured and pursue an ADA coordinator certification which she completed this August. Her desire to learn how ADA works in the real world and to share whatever expertise she has is what led her to pursue appointment to the Disability Commission. She loves sitting on the committee and learning about the challenges individuals face and the innovative solutions which are possible. She believes Northampton should be a place where everybody can be safe, participate and enjoy everything the city has to offer. She is a strong believer in universal design and creating avenues for universal participation. Building this is beneficial to the large boomer generation which is experiencing new limitations - sensory, degenerative and physical - at a rapid rate due to aging and illnesses.

She asks, "Has the city asked its residents what accommodations they would like to see and what barriers to accessibility they experience?" If so, is that information used to inform city decisions? She would like to see the city have a mechanism for addressing the impact of any new programs or sweeping changes on the lives of residents with disabilities.

Councilor LaBarge said she is definitely positively recommending Kathy Murri for appointment to the Disability Commission. Councilor Quinlan seconded. The motion passed unanimously 4:0 by roll call vote.

Susan McDonald-Bolanos

Councilor Foster said she spoke to Susan McDonald-Bolanos over the weekend. She echoed what Councilor Quinlan saw of Ashlynn, that it is really exciting to see people who are younger

stepping up to serve on boards and commissions. Susan is actually a 2nd year student at Smith College. She lives on campus year round and is majoring in economics and government and looking for opportunities to get involved in local government. She studied in China when she was younger and was especially touched by the resolution condemning xenophobia and anti-Asian sentiment in the wake of COVID-19. She is very invested in human rights issues and looking to see how she can serve Northampton.

Councilor Foster moved to forward the appointment of Susan McDonald-Bolanos to the Human Rights Commission with a positive recommendation. Councilor Maiore seconded. The motion passed unanimously 4:0 by roll call vote.

Janna White – Planning Board

Councilor Foster said she talked to her last week. Ms. White's appointment would be to go from an associate to a full member. She has been an associate member for a few years and really loves it. She's learned a lot and something she's really been reflecting on is focusing on public input and planning. She has been really considering how to solicit public input from people who may not necessarily be accessing meetings through traditional channels and acknowledging and hearing that input even if decisions don't ultimately make everybody happy. (She is very much aware that it's not possible to make everybody happy.) What's great about Janna is that she is a renter; she lives in a multi-family house in town and so represents a different demographic from the traditional homeowner. She mentioned that very often on the Planning Board they will see a lot of interest around trees, parking and multi-families. She's excited about going from an associate to a full member.

Councilor Foster moved to positively recommend the appointment of Janna White to the Planning Board as a full member. Councilor Quinlan seconded. The motion passed unanimously 4:0 by roll call vote.

Chris Tait – Planning Board

Councilor Quinlan said they spoke over the weekend. On Thursday, he had a chance to talk to Carolyn Misch, and she spent about 10 minutes on the phone explaining the difference between a full member and an associate member. Chris has 15 years as a licensed civil engineer and so has presented to planning boards on the other side of the table as an applicant. His experience in site design, Stormwater management, permitting, etc. gives him not only an understanding of the process but of what's behind the process. One thing that gave him a brief moment of pause is that Chris is an employee of Baystate Health as a project manager. He said he might have to recuse himself if Baystate Health were an applicant. Chris sent this application into the city well over a year ago. He was interested in either the ZBA, Planning Board or Conservation Commission and now finally a spot has opened. He is really committed to trying to get involved in the city.

Councilor Quinlan moved to forward the appointment of Chris Tait to the Planning Board as an associate member with a positive recommendation. Councilor Maiore seconded. The motion passed unanimously 4:0 by roll call vote.

NEW BUSINESS

The committee has two new appointments referred out October 1st - Kent Alexander to the Arts Council and Jeff Jones to the Northampton Housing Authority. Councilor Foster volunteered to interview Kent Alexander and Councilor LaBarge said she would interview Jeff Jones.

Councilor LaBarge asked councilors to put their thinking caps on about who they would like to see come in.

Councilor Quinlan noted that, similar to the Recreation Department, it seems to him like senior services are limited as to the services they are able to provide out right now. He said he's wondering what they are offering city seniors.

Councilor LaBarge said she would try to get Marie Westburg and Ann-Marie Moggio. She would like to get the DPW to come in, Councilor LaBarge said. She knows in talking to the director that she laid off quite a few people. Ms. Krutzler said she would try to get her to come in.

Councilor LaBarge proposed having Director LaScaleia at 4 p.m. and Ann-Marie Moggio at 4:20 p.m.

Councilor Foster asked if there's been an update from the mayor's office on the information request regarding the demographics of people serving on city boards.

Mrs. Krutzler said she wasn't sure if she should be making a request for this information to the mayor's office at this point or presenting an offer by the committee to collect it themselves. Councilor Foster said she feels comfortable contacting chairs of boards and commissions herself if the mayor's office is not able to take on the task. She is interested in collecting some data on socio-economic status in addition to age, race and gender. She suggested adding the question of whether board members own or rent.

Councilor Maiore mentioned the Collaborative for Educational Services (CES) is administering a grant to collect some of this information. She suggested having Sarah Bankert of CES come to make a presentation before pursuing the information request with the mayor's office. Councilor Foster agreed with the idea of inviting a representative of the collaborative.

Ms. Krutzler said it hasn't typically been under City Services purview to pursue information from outside agencies. Councilor LaBarge said she thought City Services' charge was strictly department heads throughout the city.

Because the grant is relevant to a city service it feels very relevant to her, Councilor Foster said. Quoting from the council rules, Councilor Quinlan noted that the jurisdiction of City Services is "Matters related to the activities and operation of municipal government." It doesn't preclude them from talking to anyone, he noted. He stated his opinion that this is a matter related to the activities and operation of municipal government.

Members agreed to invite Sarah Bankert to the November meeting. They are comfortable holding off on the information request until they have spoken to her, they decided.

7. Adjourn

There being no further business, Councilor Foster moved to adjourn. Councilor Quinlan seconded. The motion carried 4:0 by roll call vote. The meeting was adjourned at 5 p.m.

Prepared By:

L. Krutzler, Administrative Assistant to the City Council

413.587.1210; lkutzler@northamptonma.gov